THE BENEFACTORS

OF THE

MEDICAL SCHOOL OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY;

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF THE

LATE DR. GEORGE PARKMAN.

BY

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, M. D.

PARKMAN PROFESSOR OF ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY.

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AN

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE,

DELIVERED AT THE

MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL COLLEGE,

NOVEMBER 7, 1850,

BY

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, M. D.

PARKMAN PROFESSOR OF ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY.

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EXTRACTS FROM THE RECORDS OF THE MEDICAL FACULTY OF HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

October 15, 1850. Voted, That the Parkman Professor of Anatomy and Physiology be requested to pay a suitable Tribute, in his Introductory Lecture, to the Memory of the late Dr. George Parkman; the warm Friend and liberal Benefactor of this Institution.

November 9, 1850. Voted, That the Thanks of this Faculty be presented to Dr. Holmes, for the very interesting and appropriate Memoir, in his Introductory Lecture, of the late Dr. Parkman.

Boston, November 11, 1850.

Gentlemen,

In accordance with the Vote passed at the late Meeting of the Faculty, I have the honor of submitting my Lecture to your disposal, thanking you at the same time for the good opinion you have been pleased to express concerning it.

I am, gentlemen, faithfully yours,

O. W. Holmes.

To the Medical Faculty
of Harvard University.

LECTURE.

The loss, within the past year, of one to whom this Institution is deeply indebted, is brought back to us, with all its associations, by the return of the stated period of instruction. One duty remains, which no pang of memory must prevent us from discharging. A friend and benefactor has been taken from us, and we claim, as a mournful privilege, to speak a few words in grateful remembrance of those virtues and good deeds, too little known by the many to whom his name has grown familiar. Let us recall some traits of his character, in connection with subjects and names upon which we are pleased to dwell; which he loved while living, and with which he would have asked that his memory should be associated after his days should be numbered. We stand upon the soil which his bounty set apart as a place for medical education, surrounded by other monuments of the munificence of our departed and living friends; let us touch briefly upon the claims of Medical Education on the enlightened liberality of the profession and the public; let us freshen with a few light

strokes the old inscriptions on the tombs of our early patrons, and pass to the notice of him to whom simple justice and uncolored truth will be eulogy more than sufficient.

Why should Medical Institutions, devoted to professional education, be considered as proper objects of public or private munificence? All that is wanted, it may be said, is a convenient place to teach in, a few tools of various kinds, such as pictures, models, instruments, preparations, and a school is permanently provided with all it needs for teaching the various branches of Medicine. And this is true with certain qualifications. Some of us have seen a well known Swiss surgeon take his handkerchief and apply it successively in different forms, answering to all the bandages invented by surgical ingenuity. A good teacher will give instruction which shall be effective so far as it goes, with obviously insufficient means of illustrating his subject, and even make his hearers forget what they ought to require of him; but the fact will still remain, that, for a thorough and truly satisfactory course of teaching, a great stock of implements, costly so far as they can be bought, slow of attainment, and requiring great labor so far as they are to be created, is essentially necessary.

There is probably not a school in this country, the teachers of which do not feel that every branch taught in their institution could be much better enforced, if they were provided with appliances which cannot be obtained without a greater sacrifice than men who labor with moderate compensation can be expected to

make. The purchase of books, alone, supposing them included among the implements I am speaking of, is usually and necessarily conducted upon the most limited scale. The consequence naturally is, that both teacher and scholar are cramped and narrowed in their mental growth, that nature is studied not merely at second, but at third hand, in lean compilations from works, whose life has exhaled in the slow process of evisceration. For lively descriptions, cut with the sharp lines of the master's graver, they are forced to take the blunted stamps of the copyist; for the splendid delineations of original artists, the tame reproductions of mechanical imitators; and thus the whole standard of excellence is so uniformly and gently let down, that what is lost is hardly missed in the midst of universal deterioration.

And yet of all the materials required by the teacher, books are those most easily procured. If libraries are almost never what they should be, the other means of instruction are still more apt to be grossly insufficient. I need not speak of clinical opportunities; essential as they are to all thorough teaching, the want of them is not always to be remedied by any degree of liberality. But the means for explaining the lessons given in the branches admitting of illustration and experiment; these should be within the reach of all who profess to instruct, and yet they are often beyond the means of those who are in themselves every way competent to use them.

It cannot be questioned that the *demonstrative* courses, those in which the student is to see for himself objects and phenomena which books can only

tell him of, are the ones most truly essential to any medical school, and that just so far as every course of instruction admits of being made demonstrative, its hold upon the student is increased. Every thing else he can get from books, but the exquisitely managed experiment, the nice and skilful manipulation, the rare specimen,—for which a pathologist has waited, it may be, half his lifetime, — the ingenious and expensive model, — for these, he must resort to some institution which has means beyond those of private students and practitioners. Without such aids, all that the lecturer can give, and the book cannot, is a pleasant voice, an agreeable expression, a colloquial manner, a familiar license of illustration, perhaps an occasional burst of eloquence, — gifts not to be undervalued, but which would not alone be enough to keep medical schools in existence. This is not the time to enter into an enumeration of the specific materials which each teacher ought to have at his disposal. But if it is remembered, that in each department almost innumerable facts are brought forward, every one of them capable of exhibition or elucidation to the eye in some mode or other ; that many of them never will be grasped, or at least never will be retained, unless they are made visible as well as audible, some idea may be gathered of the task implied in the equipment of a school which professes to furnish thorough medical instruction.

And to provide the means for illustrating the various branches to the required extent, implies a great deal more than might at first sight seem necessary. Extensive architectural conveniences are only the first

essential. Room enough, and rooms enough, to hold every thing, and have its own place for every thing; these conditions are a preliminary requisite, and in great towns, where land is made by shovelfuls and sold by the square inch of surface, they constitute a formidable and often insuperable difficulty. Ample halls for lectures, so warmed and ventilated that the student need not risk his own life and health in pursuit of the knowledge which is to fit him for taking care of other people's; a spacious apartment, where the objects illustrating healthy and diseased structure may be displayed to advantage; rooms adapted for the labors of each branch that requires practical preparation to be made before a lecture is given; these, and the incidental accommodations of various kinds that they imply, are beyond the private resources of most of those who are fitted to make them useful when obtained. If the outlay such an establishment must call for, were made by a few enterprising individuals of moderate resources, it must be considered to some extent as a commercial speculation, and there is great risk that its management will become too much a matter of trade. Any institution oppressed by a debt which it finds hard to struggle against, is in danger of becoming demoralized and degraded under the pressure of its necessities.

If these general statements are correct, the schools in question are among those objects which an enlightened liberality, public and private, will think it wise to foster and encourage. It cannot be necessary to show, by labored argument, that the community is

deeply interested in having a thoroughly educated class of men to take charge of their health and lives. The least panic on the part of individuals or society, a threatening symptom in the one case, an impending pestilence in the other, sends them at once to their most intelligent and best trained medical advisers. The self-taught genius and the fancy practitioner are not the favorite counsellors of men in real danger, and boards of health in real perplexity. Knit into the very existence of every well organized society, there must be a body of men recognized not only as adepts in their daily business of treating diseases, but as scholars by the learned, and as gentlemen by the social tribunal which laughs at theoretical equality. The hand that should be lifted to strike the healing art from its place among the liberal callings, would take from society a protection, as well as an ornament, and give it instead a set of artisans, of whom their brethren that work in wood, or iron, or leather, would justly be ashamed. For there is nothing that saves Medicine from being the lowest of arts, but giving it a place among the noblest of sciences; the question is between Hallers, Hunters, Baillies, Dupuytrens, Coopers, on the one hand, and the Hygeist, the Indian doctress, the natural Bone-setter, and the Manufacturer of Syrup of Sarsaparilla, on the other!

No Institution has more cause for gratitude for public and private acts of munificence than our own. The occasion does not permit any extended notice of the many liberal patrons, who from time to time, during a

long period in the history of the College, have contributed to its means of furnishing a complete medical education. A brief mention of some of its former benefactors may fitly precede that of the friend whose loss has suggested the subjects chosen on this occasion.

In the Massachusetts Gazette of February 26, 1764, is an account of a great calamity, from which this extract is taken. "Last night Harvard College suffered the most ruinous loss it ever met with since its foundation. In the middle of a very tempestuous night, a severe cold storm of snow, attended with high wind, we were awakened by the alarm of fire. Harvard Hall, the only one of our ancient buildings that still remained, and the repository of our most valuable treasures, the public library and philosophical apparatus, was seen in flames. In a very short time, this venerable monument of the piety of our ancestors was turned into a heap of ruins. The Library and the Apparatus, which for many years had been growing, and were now judged to be the best furnished in America, are annihilated." Among the losses recorded is the following: "A Collection of the most approved Medical Authors, chiefly presented by Mr. James, of the island of Jamaica, to which Dr. Mead and other gentlemen made very considerable additions; also Anatomical Cuts, and two complete Skeletons of different sexes. This Collection would have been very serviceable to a Professor of Physic and Anatomy, when the revenues of the College should have been sufficient to subsist a gentlemen in this character." I have not been able to ascertain what was the profes-

sion of Mr. James, nor the circumstances which caused him to take an interest in the College. The name and renown of Richard Mead, belong not merely to Medical Art and to England, but to science and the world. We need look no further for a motive to his munificence, than his universal liberality and world-wide relations with men of learning. The friend of Pope, of Halley, of Newton, the patron of scholars and artists of all kinds, who entertained at his table learned men of all countries, could not but know the existence of the struggling seminary in the western wilderness; and to know its wants was enough to insure the patronage of him who united "the magnificence of princes with the pleasures of philosophers."

Francis Archibald is recorded as having given a human skeleton, and William Davis, the human veins and arteries filled with wax, both in the year 1748; and therefore their gifts must have perished in the great conflagration.

The first large bequest made to the College for the express purpose of encouraging medical instruction, was that of Ezekiel Hersey of Hingham, who died in 1770. He bequeathed one thousand pounds to the President and Fellows, "The interest thereof to be by them appropriated towards the support of a Professor of Anatomy and Physic." His widow, afterwards Mrs. Sarah Derby, added an equal sum to this legacy, declaring her "motive to be to promote the views of her first husband, Dr. Ezekiel Hersey, and to extend the knowledge of those arts and sciences which have principally for their object the preservation of the ani-

mal economy." This noble gift to Harvard College, and a single deed still nobler in its character, are all I will relate of him. They alone constitute a biography. "Dr. Hersey was called to a colored female while in critical circumstances, another physician having failed to afford relief. It was in a winter night, and during a cold snow-storm, the distance eight miles. The message was delivered to him under some doubts whether he ought to expose himself; but he replied, 'Whether black or white, she is of the human family, and shall have my assistance.' When he arrived at the log hut in the woods, he found he had left some articles at home, which the case required; he returned for the purpose, rode a second time to the patient, and administered the necessary assistance, and her life was preserved."

Dr. Abner Hersey, a younger brother of Ezekiel Hersey, "from respect to the memory, and in aid of the design of his brother," bequeathed five hundred pounds for the establishment and support of a Professor of Surgery and Physic at the University. He was a man of excellent principles, and widely respected as a practitioner, but whimsical to a remarkable degree; a teetotaler and vegetable feeder before the time, who dressed, like George Fox, in tanned hides; seven calf-skins, after the example of the Homeric heroes, being cut and formed into an outer garment to serve as his shield against the great foes of the country physician, cold, rain and snows.

John Cuming, of Concord, a Lieutenant in the Colonial army during the French War of 1755, and who afterwards studied and practised medicine, at his

death, in 1788, left three hundred pounds sterling with a portion of his estate, "The income to be appropriated for a Professor of Physic, if any such there be or shall be." He is spoken of by his biographer as an able and honest physician, a sensible and generous friend, and a sincere Christian.

William Erving, born in Boston, and a graduate of Harvard College in 1753, to whom the College is indebted for a large legacy, was an officer of the British army through the period of the Revolution, but avoided employment against his native country, and returned to pass the latter portion of his life near the place of his birth. His character, which is said to have been distinguished by the best qualities belonging to the gentleman and the soldier, receives more light from the single expression of his will, "being unwilling to pass through existence without profiting the community," than from the phrases of his obituary.

Ward Nicholas Boylston, whose name is associated with so many beneficent acts in behalf of Harvard College, had a family claim to an interest in Medical Science, and a family tendency to show it by noble acts of liberality. Zabdiel Boylston, who first introduced inoculation for the small pox into this country, was his great uncle, and Nicholas Boylston, a distinguished friend and benefactor of the University, was his uncle. To the younger Boylston the College owes the foundation of prizes for Elocution, in its Academic branch; and in the Medical department, that of the Library and the several Annual Prizes, known by his name. He also made additions to the

"Medical Library," which was formed principally by donations made by the Professors, and which is kept in this building, while the "Boylston Medical Library" is maintained in immediate connection with the great collection at Cambridge. Mr. Boylston also obtained for the College a very valuable and interesting donation from Sir John Nichols, an eminent barrister in London, whose father, Dr. Frank Nichols, married a daughter of Dr. Mead, already mentioned as an early benefactor of the College. It consisted of anatomical preparations made by Dr. Nichols, who was distinguished as an anatomist and physiologist, and the author of several Essays. The name of Boylston is deservedly perpetuated in our medical institutions; the mild and benignant countenance, which graces one of the halls where we assemble, was the index of his beneficent disposition.

Esther Sprague of Dedham, the widow of a distinguished practitioner, in the year 1811, bequeathed two thousand dollars to Harvard College; its income to be applied for the support of a Professor of the Theory and Practice of Physic in the College.

John Foster, of Cambridge, who died in 1836, bequeathed two thousand dollars to the President and Fellows of Harvard College "in trust for the sole purpose of assisting, in such manner and at such times as they shall consider best, such students of Theology, Law and Medicine, or either of them, as shall be poor, and need such pecuniary assistance, while pursuing their preparatory professional studies." This gentleman passed the greater portion of his life in almost complete seclusion, so that most of his townsmen, like

myself, had never seen his face, and hardly, perhaps, remembered his existence. Yet at his death the tender secret is betrayed, that separation was not alienation; that in his lonely chamber, and in those midnight walks, in which his mysterious path was sometimes crossed by others, he still retained his native kindness of feeling; and that he left a world for which his sensitive nature was unfitted, with nothing but love in a heart so long shut out from the common range of softening influences.

I need not here relate in detail the circumstances under which a portion of the munificent donation of the State to the University was applied by those who controlled its disposition to the construction of the former College edifice. Massachusetts has never been wanting to her higher schools of learning; and the recent grant to a sister Institution shows that the spirit of liberality has not deserted her enlightened councils.

Still less is it necessary to do more than allude to those who are yet among us, and have exercised during life that large and noble generosity often left until its offerings cease in some measure to be a voluntary sacrifice. Their monuments are all around us; in the Museum, in the Library, in the means furnished for increasing these extensive collections, we recognize the hand of their spontaneous and magnanimous bounty.

One name remains, no longer to be passed over with the reserve which is due to the living; not to be

uttered without a solemn awe within these precincts, consecrated by him to the great cause of useful learning.

George Parkman, the fourth son of Samuel Parkman, an eminent and wealthy merchant of Boston, was born on the 19th of February, 1790. In his early years his health was delicate, so that he learned to value the services of medical art from his own experience; a circumstance which may have probably turned his attention to the profession, and which doubtless tended to form those habits of living to which he owed, in great measure, the strength and activity of his riper age.

The names of his instructors, the late Dr. Gardner, and the much respected teacher still with us, Mr. William Wells, are sufficient evidence of the care with which his education was conducted. The influence exerted by such masters is visible in many of the written records he has left of himself; a familiarity with the classics, and a fondness for illustrating the subjects he approached by citations from them; a peculiarity in the construction of his sentences, even, reminds us that he never forgot his early lessons.

At the age of fifteen, he entered the Freshman class of Harvard College. His connection with the two principal literary Societies of the University, which then, as now, embraced a large portion of the most intelligent and studious young men of the upper classes, shows that he was recognized by his fellows as one of their deserving and promising associates. At graduation he received the high honor of

being appointed to deliver the Salutatory Oration; an exercise always assigned to one of the first scholars, and generally understood to imply peculiar excellence in classical studies.

On leaving College, he commenced the study of Medicine with Dr. John Jeffries, a man of original mind, of finished education, and great practical experience, the physician of his father's family, in whom it was the good fortune of the young medical student to find at once an instructor and a friend. It is pleasant to know that the friendship and confidence originating so long ago, continued in the second generation, until death broke in upon these kindly relations. During this time, also, he attended the Lectures of the Medical Institution of the University. It was an interesting period in its history. Dr. John Warren, the accomplished Surgeon and eloquent Teacher, was not yet withdrawn from the scene of his most faithful and effective labors. The son whom he was introducing to a still longer and still more conspicuous career of exertion, was just beginning the systematic instructions, which for almost half a century he was to continue with equal fidelity and success. Dr. Gorham, whom Science had hoped to ravish from her practical sister, but who was too soon reclaimed to minister to the daily wants of the community, was interesting the growing classes with the splendid discoveries of Priestley, Lavoisier, and Davy. The well known teacher, whom I need not name in this assembly, had just given the first of those Clinical Lectures, under which so many successive classes were taught the art of questioning, interpreting, following,

and guiding Nature, as she works in the mysterious movements of internal disease.

Such were the Instructors, to whom the diligent and conscientious student owed his first impressions of medical art and science. I can recall the enthusiasm and delight, with which he dwelt upon the merits of his early teaching, and I cannot refer to it without being reminded of the immeasurable influence exerted by every instructor, who must stamp his own zeal or apathy, his own high or low relief, upon the plastic minds of his yet unmoulded pupils.

In 1811, Dr. Parkman went to Europe to complete his medical education. Favored as he had been in the influences under which he was brought up in his own country, he was as fortunate in the friends and counsellors that he found in the land of strangers. On leaving home he was committed to the charge of Joel Barlow, who had just been appointed Minister to France. Under the care of the Ambassador of his country, in the ship commanded by Commodore Isaac Hull, and that ship the frigate Constitution, he left the land of his birth under the most favorable auspices. On reaching Paris, he found himself in the immediate neighborhood of an early friend of his father's, Benjamin Thompson, formerly of Woburn, Massachusetts, but then Count Rumford, residing at his beautiful villa in Auteuil, about four miles from the city. With introductions and patrons like these, every thing lay open before him that the great metropolis could offer the student of science and the enlightened observer of men and manners. Mr. Barlow introduced him to the acquaintance of Lafayette;

Count Rumford carried him to the sittings of the Institute. But that noble liberality, which characterizes the public institutions of Paris, which has made the word *stranger* almost superfluous in the vocabulary of her visiters, in welcoming him, as it has since welcomed so many others, to her ample hospitals and vast asylums, soon determined the direction in which his free choice should finally settle.

In the palace-like structure devoted to the care of age and infirmity in the sex least able to provide for its own declining years, one great department has long been devoted to those afflicted with mental diseases. And at the head of this department, were, at the time of Dr. Parkman's early visit, two physicians, whose names and labors are known as far as civilization has extended. His own recollections, revived long afterwards in a visit to the scene of his early studies, have an interest connected with the subject as well as the writer.

"My first knowledge," he says in a letter from Paris, "of the Salpêtrière, was with the high privilege of the guidance of its great physician, Pinel, and of his now illustrious associate, Esquirol. Pinel received me kindly, and inquired with much interest after Dr. Rush, who had lately written his book on 'Diseases of the Mind.' Pinel was then nearly seventy years old. His mildness, patience, forbearance, and encouraging spirit towards the insane women, some hundreds, under his charge, and towards their anxious and inquiring friends, were admirable. As a teacher, he excelled in the precision and variety of his notes and tables, and as a natural historian of

disease. His frequent question was, "How are we to know when, and how far it is advisable to intermeddle with a malady, unless we have learned its natural and ordinary termination, if left to itself? We do not know enough to be authorized in every case to try to alter or correct its course." It was under such masters, in the great Parisian Asylum, that Dr. Parkman was taught the history and treatment of mental diseases. Here he was led to form the plan of devoting himself to their study, and of attempting to introduce into his own native State, the enlightened methods which his wise and benevolent Teacher had been mainly instrumental in establishing in the hospitals of Europe.

Having devoted much time to his studies in Paris, he determined to visit England, which he was obliged to reach by passing through Holland, direct intercourse being interrupted by the state of war then existing. The name of Count Rumford served as an introduction to the favor of men of science and cultivation in England, as it had done upon the Continent. After a few months' residence there, he returned to his native country, in the autumn of 1813.

The war between America and Britain called for the services of young men of professional skill and accomplishment, and Dr. Parkman soon received a commission as surgeon in a regiment of the third brigade belonging to the first division of the Massachusetts militia. He was detailed for duty to the regiment encamped at South Boston. In the mean time, in the midst of his official duties, "he zealously engaged in practice among the poor, who could command his faithful services at all hours."

Such leisure as he could find in the midst of these engrossing occupations was devoted to the study of insanity. He sent a circular to the postmasters, clergymen and other individuals able to afford information, for the purpose of ascertaining the number of insane persons in their several districts, the returns to which might form a basis for the philanthropic movement then about to be instituted. In 1814, he issued a pamphlet entitled "Proposals for establishing a Retreat for the Insane," of which he was to take the charge. In this pamphlet he gives his general views as to the proper treatment of insanity, which it is needless to say were modelled upon those of his illustrious master, Pinel.

The treatment of the insane has too often been a reproach to civilized countries. "In New England," said Dr. Parkman, "but little ingenuity has been exercised to increase the comforts of the insane, or to procure his recovery. He has, in many instances, been left to subsist on bread and water, and to lie on straw, chained in a dark, solitary and loathsome cell, experiencing no solicitude in his fate, and a victim of an idle and sometimes interested maxim, that 'Insanity is incurable.' His personal liberty has been taken from him, perhaps by his nearest relative or dearest friend, whose occasional reproaches have wounded him deeply. The idea of being under restraint, in a place where he perhaps considers himself master, is constantly irritating him, and his distress is aggravated by the brutality of his attendants. Many instances, in which the malevolent dispositions are apparent, may be traced to secondary causes, arising from the pecu-

liar circumstances of the patient, or from the management." All the proposed arrangements of the Institution were to be ordered on the mild and humane principles which the experience of the Salpêtrière had so remarkably indicated as the only just and successful foundation of treatment in this class of diseases. The character of the house was to resemble, as much as possible, that of a private residence, affording as many enjoyments of social life as circumtances permitted; and the aim of the superintendent was to be, to show himself a "friend, indefatigable in his exertions to render the patients happy, and to restore them to usefulness."

Dr. Parkman may be truly said, therefore, to have first appeared in professional life as the enthusiastic and self-devoted advocate of one of the great reforms, which humanity counts among the glories of the past century, and which, familiar as its results now are to all of us, required the same enterprise and energy for its successful introduction, that every great and costly change of habit demands. It is no slight praise to record of him that he selected such a field for study and action. Without disparagement of the practitioners in any other branch of medical science, it may be said, that in intelligence, in philanthropic zeal, in liberal and philosophical habits of thinking, in general acquirements and accomplishments, in harmonious union as a body acting for the common good of the community, the men who, during the past half century, have devoted themselves to the study of insanity, have been signally preëminent. Pinel, Esquirol, Tuke, and, in our own country, Rush,

Wyman, Woodward, Brigham; not one of these names that does not recall the most admirable traits of mind and character; and their living brethren are not unworthy of those who have gone before them. Here was a young man, expecting to inherit a princely fortune, choosing voluntarily a branch of the profession which would be sure to require of him the most incessant devotion and the largest sacrifices; not thinking himself absolved by his more than affluent circumstances from the wholesome hardships of labor; not dallying in graceful indolence with the studies less needful to him than others, but selecting the highest department of research, following the ablest masters, establishing correspondences with many of the wisest and best practitioners of Europe; and all this for the good of a community of which circumstances had rendered him comparatively independent, except for its good opinion. Few persons are aware of the degree of credit fairly belonging to him for his agency in fixing public attention on the great object, since so triumphantly effected in the establishment of the noble institutions of this and the neighboring States. Circumstances to which I may briefly allude, caused the work in which he had interested himself, to be consigned to other hands for its completion. A Lunatic Hospital had been organized in accordance with his plans, and he had taken his place at the head of the Institution. It was subsequently believed that the utility of such an Institution would be increased by uniting it with the Massachusetts General Hospital. Under these circumstances Dr. Parkman thought it proper to

resign his office into the hands of the new Directors, and the place for which he had so long labored was at length filled by another. That this was a great sacrifice we can hardly doubt; but he never allowed it to alienate his affections from his cherished branch of study, or to raise an unworthy feeling towards him who might have been too naturally regarded only as standing in the way of his own promised reward for years of patient labor. Thirty years afterwards he speaks of the late Dr. Wyman, as "An enlightened and faithful Superintendent," and utters the generous exclamation, "May the bright example and the great service of him, who devoted the best part of his life and health to the interest of our Asylum, be ever cherished by our community!"

A single establishment was, at the time of its foundation, sufficient for the wants of this region, and the munificent provisions which enriched the "McLean Asylum," rendered it in every way equal to the public necessity, so far as then recognized. From this time, therefore, Dr. Parkman necessarily relinquished the design of occupying himself with the treatment of insanity upon the large scale. Not the less, however, did he keep his mind ever active upon the subject of his early studies. Nor was it a single branch only, that claimed his constant attention, but the profession in all its interests was always dear to him. "He was never weaned from his first love, Medicine," says an old friend, "and ever afforded an encouraging word and deed to aid all generous endeavors to alleviate human suffering."

He was frequently called on to testify in Court in

cases of alleged insanity, and often communicated articles to the journals relating to this and kindred subjects. In the year 1817, he published an Essay entitled, "Management of Lunatics, with Illustrations of Insanity," intended, as shown by a manuscript note of his own, as an outline or syllabus, but containing, in a condensed form, many valuable remarks on the history and treatment of mental disease. In this paper he recommended and illustrated, by a drawing, the double apartment for the confinement of violent and dangerous lunatics. For this he received the favorable notice of Dr. Haslam, in a letter to the Governors of Bethlem Hospital. In the following year he published "Remarks on Insanity," containing some interesting observations on the analogies of diseased states of mind, with some of the conditions not commonly recognized as morbid. A very striking anecdote is here given, in which the first indications of insanity were noticed in a *portrait*, recently painted, of the affected person, by the late Gilbert Stuart. This paper was republished in the London Medical and Physical Journal. The most distinguished writer on Medical Jurisprudence that this country has produced, declares that he is greatly indebted to the publications of Dr. Parkman, whom he characterizes as "A learned and diligent examiner of the subject of insanity."

During a period of many years following these publications, it does not appear that he was in the habit of writing for the public. In the memorable trial of Abraham Prescott, for the murder of Mrs. Cochran, in 1833, the report of which forms a

considerable volume, Dr. Parkman appeared as one of the most prominent witnesses called to give evidence on the subject of insanity. In his testimony he states that he had the charge of a house for the insane before the establishment of the Public Asylum; and that he has ever since continued to attend to insanity, and to subjects which are allied to it, and to record observations relative to it.

During a visit to Europe, in the year 1837, he wrote a long and interesting letter to the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal, giving an account of some of the Parisian Hospitals, especially of the scene of his earlier studies, the Salpêtrière, and containing very pleasant sketches of some of the leading French practitioners. Twenty years of separation from the more active labors of practice, do not seem to have diminished in the least the lively enthusiasm with which he regarded every thing connected with medicine and its practitioners. During the following years, and until within a few weeks of his death, he was at intervals a contributor to the pages of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal. He still loved to dwell upon his chosen subject, and in his notices of Cowper, Earl Dudley, and Swift, the last written in October, 1849, shows his fondness for uniting the pursuit of his favorite branch with a wider range of reading than that of the mere technical student. The sententious style of his communications was evidently derived from the precept and example of his great master, Pinel. "I confine myself," says the latter, "within the limits of the dryest and coldest statement. Every proposition is reduced to its simplest

expression. The language of aphorism should be our model in medical writings; every object of research shows the need of it."

On the death of his father, Dr. Parkman had come into the possession of a large fortune, which, during the period we have briefly traced by its few printed records, had greatly increased. To the cares which this entailed upon him much of his time was necessarily devoted, and it is only remarkable that he did not forget his early pursuits in the new position to which the management of a great estate had called him.

His feelings and dispositions are best shown by his acts, two of which were so remarkable in their character as to deserve particular mention.

At the period of the first invasion of Cholera, when the city was called upon to make sudden and large provision for the reception of those attacked by this fearful malady, it is understood that Dr. Parkman offered his own house in Cambridge Street to be used as a Hospital for this purpose. For some reason, which I have not been able to learn, the city did not avail itself of the offer of this ample and costly mansion.

On a subsequent occasion of somewhat similar character, he again offered assistance to the city in a time of great need and perplexity. The following extracts from the City Records will tell the facts better than any version I could give of them.

From the Report of the Committee of the City Council on Small Pox, dated 2d Dec. 1839.

"There is at present no public building which

can be used for this purpose, and the Committee were unable for some time, and after much research, to find a suitable private one. The unsolicited liberality of an individual has now, however, amply supplied this want. Dr. George Parkman has kindly offered to the City the gratuitous use of several of his houses, so long as the necessity of the case may require it, and the Committee have accordingly accepted two houses, which will be ample for the purpose."

From a Report of the same Committee, dated April 6th, 1840.

"Resolved, That the thanks of this Board be presented to Dr. George Parkman for the noble and disinterested philanthropy, so obviously manifested by tendering the use of buildings free of expense to the City, to be occupied by persons afflicted with a malady the most contagious and loathsome of any enumerated in the catalogue of diseases."

A more recent instance of the same readiness to alleviate human suffering in all its forms, is thus recorded in the last Report of the Superintendent of the Boston Lunatic Hospital.

"Among the many individual and associated recipients of the generosity of the lamented Dr. George Parkman, few have more reason to hold his memory in grateful respect than the officers and inmates of this Institution. Fully versed in every phase of insanity, and impressed as he was with the depth of suffering into which so many have sunk, it seemed an object of the kindest solicitude with him to make

frequent visits to this place; to converse with true sympathy concerning the necessities of the sufferers he observed here, and to proffer with rare delicacy, not suggestions only for their comfort, but substantial and tangible gifts for their relief.

"It is not long since we had the gratification of accepting from him a valuable organ for the chapel of the Institution; which has afforded more pleasure, and produced a more tranquillizing effect than any other donation we have received. A piano forte, with numerous other gifts received from him at various times, have here served the same happy purpose of mollifying the grief, and calming the excitement of many a sufferer."

The liberality which he had shown in these offers and gifts, was manifested in various ways towards other objects. He was a generous friend to the Society for Medical Improvement, and joined another honored benefactor of the Medical Profession in becoming responsible for important assistance to its resources. Although not educating any of his own family to the practice of medicine, the cause of Medical Education, and especially its interests as connected with this Institution, were objects of his deep regard. The time at length came, when this feeling was to show itself in a conspicuous and enduring form.

The College in Mason Street, erected in the year 1816, was an ample and convenient edifice for the classes which for a number of years resorted to it for instruction. Situated in the heart of the city, its

locality presented many advantages, which, so long as its limited space permitted the accommodation of the several departments of instruction, fitted it well for its purpose. It was far removed, however, from the Massachusetts General Hospital, where the student must obtain a large part of his most valuable instruction. Shut in by other buildings, which prevented its enlargement, it was thought impracticable to make such changes in its interior as would supply its gradually increasing wants. With various alternations from year to year, the classes had been steadily enlarging in each successive period of ten years, while the Cabinet accumulated by the Professor of Anatomy had been multiplying its specimens, until both Lecture Rooms and Museum were clearly inadequate to the demands for space made upon them. While it was in contemplation to dispose of the existing edifice, and make an effort to obtain a more suitable place for a new building, Dr. Parkman proposed to present a lot of land for this purpose, and the Faculty having voted to accept his very liberal offer, the ground upon which this College stands was conveyed by Dr. Parkman to the University. In honor of the giver of this donation, the Government of the University bestowed his name as the perpetual title of the office which it is my privilege for the present to hold, but which will keep that name in grateful remembrance, as we trust, for long generations of successive incumbents. Dr. Parkman continued to manifest great interest in all that related to the Institution, now a permanent monument of his liberality.

At the close of the session of 1846 – 47, it was announced that Dr. John C. Warren was about to resign the Chair which he had held with honor and undiminished success for more than forty years. It was understood, that, on the last day of the public course of Lectures, he would bid farewell at once to his class and his office. Students, practitioners and teachers, were all anxious to listen to the voice of their well known master, now to be heard for the last time in the halls of instruction. Dr. Parkman was much interested in the occasion; invitations were given to many professional and other friends of the College to be present; and tables were spread, by his direction, in the ample hall of the Museum, around which the guests assembled after the Lecture, to partake of his tasteful hospitality. Many pleasant things were uttered, and kindly sentiments indulged; but nothing was said with more graceful propriety and true feeling, than these words, spoken with much emotion by Dr. Parkman, — "It was my youthful farewell to Alma Mater: Te prævideo, prospicio rerum pulcherrimam, præclarissimam. I apply it here to this Temple of Minerva Medica, our 'Latin quarter,' its probable improvements and accessories, to the Hospital, to the Children's Infirmary, where the sick poor have all that riches can command; and to you, gentlemen, be every happy result. I thank you for the cheering, cordial greeting which you have uttered whenever I have come here to share instruction with you. 'Grata vestra erga me voluntas; nullum præmium insigne monumentum postulo præter hujus diei memoriam; in animis triumphos, ornamenta colloco;

hujus temporis memoriâ, me muro septum arbitrabor.'" From this day to the time of his death, he never lost sight of the interests of this spot, which he had devoted to the cause of medical education, and which was to him, to use his own words, "A piece of Holy Land."

Such were his relations to the Institution, within the walls of which we are now assembled, and with which his memory will be associated so long as its deep foundations shall endure. It would have been a duty, had it not been a melancholy pleasure, to recall his name as that of our benefactor, at this period of our annual reunion. But the feeling which prompts such a tribute rises spontaneously in the hearts of all who knew his many excellent qualities. The wish conveyed by a formal vote of this Faculty was not confined to them. The desire had been already expressed by another body, the Society for Medical Improvement, that his memory should be suitably honored. If the task was committed to my hands, the reason may be looked for in the fact that the office I hold is honored by his name, and that from this Chair and in this Edifice, it was fitting that the virtues of the benefactor we have lost should be honorably and affectionately commemorated. Let me be pardoned for saying, that no mere literary appointment could have been half so grateful to my feelings, as to be asked to speak in commemoration of the friend whom many have named without knowing, but whom none could know and not esteem. Even without such an invitation, I could not have risen in my

place and resumed my accustomed duties without some words of respectful homage to his memory. By acts of unsought courtesy, by gifts that doubled their value by the heart-felt kindness, and even delicate sentiment that accompanied them, I learned to set a true value on the benevolence that lay beneath his unpretending plainness of manner. And many an incident has been told me, that showed how well he loved to do the kind things that others love to talk of, but so quietly, that only accident, or a revelation by those who had kept the secret during his life, could have let it be known.

A liberal gift slipped into the hand of an old friend in his hour of need; a rouleau of gold conveyed to the managers of a public charity, who never knew until after his death, where it came from; a large sum freely given to a benevolent object, on the one condition that his name should not appear; refined attentions to those whose feelings would not let them receive more; active personal assistance and continued care for the stranger, whom accident had thrown in his way destitute and unfriended; stories of these deeds, and others like them, are told in tremulous tones by those who would have remained silent, had not the rude stroke of death broken the seal of secrecy.

A life the greater portion of which was passed in occupations which did not keep him before the public, has left comparatively little to be recorded without invading the sacred circle of its private daily history. It is enough to say of him, as a friend, that his fidelity was beyond question, and in the tenderer

relations of home, that his devotion was beyond praise.

In the flame of every life which is fed from pure sources, some one ray will ever predominate and give its general coloring to all the light it sheds. Dr. Parkman was a man of strict and stern principle, and of many excellent traits of mind and character, but one quality stands preëminent among all others. A never flagging energy, a strenuous personal activity which extended to every movement and expression, characterized him above all other traits. Placed beyond the need of exertion, he never ceased to labor; with all the appliances of luxury at his command, he was always simple and frugal; he abstained while others indulged; he walked while others rode; he worked while others slept. Had this activity been only for the interests of himself and his family, it would have contrasted most honorably with the indolence which wealth is too often used to purchase. But let it not be forgotten, that from his first appearance in life as a young practitioner, to his riper fortunes as the lord of great possessions, he was always interested in some extensive plan for the good of the community. The foundation of an Asylum for Insanity; the provision of a place of treatment for the subjects of the pestilence during the panic of Cholera; the establishment of a safe place of shelter for the victims of the dreaded Small Pox; the extension of the means of usefulness of this Institution, destined to promote the same class of public interests, so far as it should succeed in affording a sound medical education; the recollection of such

services, is the truest and best tribute we can pay to his memory.

And now let us rise from a brief contemplation of the worth of our departed benefactor, with the feeling that on us, in our little period of duty, it rests to vindicate the wisdom of those who, at various times, have fostered and encouraged our own branch of this ancient Institution. All they have given, we hold in trust for the good of those who commit their training into our hands. No selfish interests must be allowed to thwart and narrow the lofty aims of those who, living and dying, have remembered the wants of this favored place of education. A power that, from year to year, is becoming more and more ample by the voluntary aid of public and private contributors, is loading those who wield it in succession, with deeper responsibilities. It can only repay its debt to those who have endowed it with the means of usefulness, by growing in grace as it grows in stature.

We may raise a marble monument upon this spot, which shall tell to all who may hereafter visit it, the generous deeds and unobtrusive virtues of the friend whose loss we mourn in the midst of the scenes that recall his memory. Our gratitude and our taste may dwell with pleasure on the thought of such a memorial. The urn upon its white pedestal, the column, with its broken shaft, the simple tablet, in whose golden letters should live some brief record of his worth; these would be grateful to our eyes and to our hearts, that dwell so sadly on darker recollections. But without these or beside these, there is

one return we can make, better than all the triumphs of sculpture; to labor in singleness of heart for those great ends which his various acts of public kindness, and especially his last gift to this Institution, proposed. Then indeed it will be true:

"Quod datur æternum durat, sequiturque datorem!"

His gifts and memory shall live in all good actions for which his bounty has furnished the facilities; and if in the world to which he has been summoned, he can look back on this, these precincts, shrouded in gloom as they have been to us, may seem to him only dimmed by passing shadows; and his love, lifted above mortal weakness, still rest over the place which on earth he cherished as Holy Land.